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CANADIAN FILM INSTITUTE

BULLETIN

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Address by W. J. Sheridan, Montreal, President, The Canadian Public Relations Society, Inc., and Assistant General Manager, The Canadian Chamber of Commerce, on the occasion of the Eleventh Annual Canadian Film Awards Presentation in the Canadian Court of the King Edward Hotel, Toronto, Friday, June 5, 1959.

May I express, first of all, my deep sense of appreciation of the honour you have paid me in inviting me to present the Certificates of Merit at this Eleventh Annual Canadian Film Awards Presentation. I consider it a rare pleasure and a very real privilege.

I have long been a devotee of motion pictures. I can recall very vividly the excitement which gripped me as a small boy when I was able to produce, at the end of the month, a satisfactory Report Card which entitled me to spend a Saturday afternoon watching "The Perils of Pauline" or "The Adventures of Eddie Polo". This was an incentive devised by my parents which worked far more successfully than almost anything else.

As a Canadian I am fully in accord with the aims and objectives of Canadian Film Awards which are to encourage high standards of film making in Canada, to direct public attention to films which are made in Canada, to provide public recognition for the achievements of Canadian film makers and to encourage the wider use of films by corporations, governments and other organizations.

Your presence here today is, I think, sufficient evidence that you, too, are interested in the aims and objects of Canadian Film Awards. You recognize, as I do, that films provide one of the most important and significant media of communication that now exists. By this means, more perhaps than by any other, there can be projected in a flash, in a single scene, in an inflection of the voice, in a motion - a thought or an idea which can consciously or unconsciously affect the attitude of a member of the audience. Because of this power and this authority, a heavy responsibility falls upon the shoulder of the film making industry and those corporations, governments and other organizations which use films for whatever purpose they have in mind. When I accepted Mr. Topshee's kind invitation to be here today, I cast about for something significant to say. My first approach was to the Encyclopaedia Britannica and the first sentence under the heading of Motion Pictures gave me a clue. This sentence reads "The motion picture is a modern machine tool in the service of expression". This opened up to me a whole line of thought because it seemed to express very succinctly and very clearly a purpose of such vast potential that the imagination of the layman is staggered. With your permission I would like to come back to this a little later.

If there is one thing that history has taught us - or should have taught us - it is that change is inevitable. No nation stands still and the faster the pace of life and the greater the developments in the fields of communications the less and less is the possibility of a country, even one as small as Canada, avoiding the main stream of history and moving faster and faster with the winds and tides of international events. Our one hope is that we can, as a people, keep control of our craft and steer a safe way into the future.

The implications of what is taking place in this fast-moving twentieth century present a very real and a very immediate danger. Too many people are too inclined to say, in the face of what is going on, that "problems are too big for me to cope with so I'll leave it to some one else who knows something about them". The attitude here is that the individual can and should wash his hands of the whole business and leave everything to the so-called experts. Nothing could present a greater threat to our way of life. Nothing could be more swiftly and surely destructive of freedom than the willingness to surrender individual responsibility to whoever is prepared to accept it. Freedom can as surely be lost by an unwillingness to assume the burdens which it imposes as it is by the imposition of superior strength. The formation of communes in China which is one of the great historical examples of regimentation - taking place in our own day - imposes on on the individual a form of serfdom or slavery which in the free world an individual imposes upon himself when he refuses to think or act with the independence which our free way of life offers.

What is badly needed in Canada today is one of the largest and most intensive public relations job that has ever been conceived. There appears to be ample evidence that there is not, in this country of ours, any widespread understanding and appreciation of the economic facts of life or any great knowledge of the essential link between freedom and the economic system under which we live. John H. Crider, veteran journalist, Pulitzer prize winner and former Editor-in-Chief of the Boston Herald, in a recent article pointed out that evidence strongly suggests that we on the North American continent have grossly neglected the seeds of our own survival. "The shocking reality is that our young people, by and large, simply do not know their economic facts of life. Untutored in the ways of their own economic system, their youthful curiosity unstimulated in this direction, our young of high school age appear to be dangerously susceptible to ideological seduction". Premier Nikita Khrushchev, Communist boss of Soviet Russia, in a statement aimed at North America, confidently predicted a short while ago that "your grandchildren in America will live under Socialism". In this statement Mr. Khrushchev was not threatening us in this part of the world with the largest and perhaps most formidable array of armed forces in the world. He was not undertaking to impose his brand of Socialism upon this continent. His statement was perhaps even more terrifying, because he was, in effect, saying that Socialism possesses a compelling contagion that not even future American generations can resist. It is this belief and not the fact of a cold war or the prospects of a hot war which imposes the greatest challenge to freedom that this world has ever seen.

Dr. F. Cyril James, Principal and Vice-Chancellor of McGill University, on his recent return from a six-weeks tour of ten Russian universities, pointed out that, due to the competitive atmosphere being so stimulating to Russian youth, the Russian scholar had been raised to a position of front-rank competency. He went on to say that "A brilliant student is brilliant whether in Canada or in Russia, but the main body of Russian students are better educated". He went on to quote as an example a seminar of economists and students which he attended. This group held an intensive and intellectual seminar in economics - all in English. He went on to ask the question "How many of our professors and students can sit down and carry on a similar seminar in Russian?"

It would appear from this and other statements that the people behind the Iron Curtain are doing a terrific job of public relations. Everything they do in the way of scientific advance, education, production and the rest is so well publicized and placed in such a favourable light that there is becoming a greater and greater acceptance of the belief that we are falling behind in the race and that "there may be something good after all in this system from a practical point of view".

Once again I come back to what I said previously about the need for an all-out public relations job for freedom, democracy and that economic and social philosophy which recognizes the importance of the individual, In view of the definition from the Encyclopaedia Britannica which I just quoted "The motion picture is a modern machine tool in the service of expression", I feel that the motion picture industry should, and indeed in many cases does, make an outstanding contribution to this end. If we can bring to all Canadians, and, as well, to as many people as possible outside of Canada, a fuller understanding and appreciation of the tremendous achievements of this thinly populated country under an economic and social system which has given Canadians one of the highest standards of living in the world while at the same time allowing a greater degree of personal freedom than almost anywhere else in the world, then the possibility of a drift away from the principles upon which our progress has been made will be brought to a halt. And those who are now weighing the comparative merits of the two ideologies which divide the East and the West may find cause for rejecting the godless materialism which characterizes the philosophy of Communism.

To those connected with the motion picture industry in Canada, as film makers or as film users, may I make this appeal that every consideration be given to taking whatever opportunity presents itself to promoting in a positive way the advantages and benefits of the way of life which has been developed in this country.

Recently in a rerun of an old English movie, the central character, a parson in a small English town, declared sadly and solemnly that the local movie house seemed to exert greater influence than the church which he served. This is an extreme statement and probably not typical but certainly it does point up the tremendous influence of films on the thinking of those who see them. If through this valuable medium we can help to dispell some of the ignorance to which I referred previously and if we can overcome some of the apathy which has gripped too many of our people with respect to the many advantages which we have in this country, then a great deal will have been done towards injecting new vitality into the body politic.

Louis O. Kelso and Mortimer J. Adler, in their book "The Capitalist Manifesto" had this significant thing to say "Men who think they already have all the liberty and justice they can expect, in addition to plenty of material goods, cannot be emotionally exhorted to take radical measures for the improvement of their society. They can only be asked to think again". I suggest that the time has come for us to think again and I can think of no better medium for creating a desire to think through our problems and recognize our blessings than motion pictures.

It has often been said that this is a time of challenge but then in every age there are challenges. We do, however, live in a world of great scientific achievement and perhaps we have a responsibility to make use of the new skills which we have found and the achievements which have been made, on behalf of freedom. Such a campaign should be positive and not merely defensive.

Again let me express my appreciation of the opportunity of being here today and extend my sincere congratulations to those who have provided this opportunity to stimulate interest in and appreciation for the outstanding work being done in Canada in this field of motion pictures.

MORE NEWS ABOUT FILM FESTIVALS

INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF FILMS will be held at Locarno from July 9th - 19th, 1959. At this Festival 35mm films will be judged.

GOLD MERCURY PRIZE

All Documentary films presented for competition at the International Exhibition for Documentary and Short Films, which takes place at the Cinema Palace, Lido of Venice, organized by the "Biennale" of Venice from the 2nd to 12th of July, 1959, may be entered in this competition. This Competition was established by the Chamber of Commerce for the best documentary film in the economical sector.

SAN FRANCISCO FILM FESTIVAL

This festival will be held this year from November 11 to 24. Three major prize categories have been added for Golden Gate Awards. These are - best screenplay, best supporting actor and best supporting actress. Festival will be held in the Metro Theatre. It is envisioned that 14 pictures will be selected for competition.

VANCOUVER FILM FESTIVAL

This Festival will be held between August 3rd and 15th as part of the Vancouver International Festival. Films from sixteen countries are entered.

STRATFORD'S 1959 INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

Thirteen feature-length motion pictures, plus an assortment of more than three times that many short subjects, from all movie-producing parts of the globe have already been scheduled for the Stratford Festival being held from August 24 - September 5.

INTERNATIONAL AMATEUR FILM FESTIVAL

This Festival will take place in Cannes, at the Palais des Festivals, from the 5th to the 15th of September, 1959. This competition is open to all amateur producers.

Films may be submitted in 8mm., 9mm.5 and 16mm.

SUMMER MOTION PICTURE WORKSHOP

The Second Annual Summer Motion

The Second Annual Summer Motion Picture Workshop on Direction, Production and Writing will be held this year from July 27th - September 4th. Application forms may be obtained by writing to the Department of Television, Motion Pictures, and Radio, New York University, Washington Square, New York 3. N. Y.

UNIVERSITY FILM PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION

The 13th Annual Conference of the University Film Producers Association will be held this year at Purdue University during the week of August 17th, 1959.

MORE AUSTRALIAN FILMS

The following films are now available from the Canadian Film Institute on a service charge basis:

JUST A TRACE

10 mins. sd. col. $1.50

The discovery and utilization of trace elements by Australian scientists of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization. The film illustrates the importance to Australia and the world of these vitamins of the soil.

PAPUA AND NEW GUINEA

19½ mins. sd. col. $3.00

Presents a general picture of Papua and New Guinea and illustrates present day development by the Department of Territories.

Films produced for the Government of Australia are also available from the Canadian Film Institute for purchase. A catalogue of films will be sent you upon request. Films may be previewed at any time.

FILMS FCR SUMMER PROGRAMMES

TWO BOYS AND A BOAT
A DAY AT THE ZOO
A DAY AT THE BEACH
CITY SAILORS
PLANE SAILING
HOLIDAYS AND WATERWAYS
ESCAPE THE CITY
WHAT ABOUT VISITING FINLAND

Descriptions of the above-mentioned films are available upon request.

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NEW GUIDANCE FILMS

HOW TO INVESTIGATE VOCATIONS

11 mins sd. b&w $1.00
Produced by Coronet Films.

This film will motivate students to investigate and determine the vocations for which they are best suited. How to interpret vocational guidance tests, how to apply this information to different vocations, how to raise questions related to a specific job, and how to gain actual job experience are all effectively portrayed.

SELLING AS A CAREER

11 mins. sd. b&w $1.00
Produced by Coronet Films - 1953.

This film explains the functions and duties of the salesman to aid those interested in selling as a career. We watch a typical salesman fill out customer reports, schedule his itinerary, make calls, present his product, handle a complaint, and promote good relations for his company.

YOUR EARNING POWER

11 mins. sd. b&w $1.00
Produced by Coronet Films.

This film tells of five conditions which influence earning power: economic conditions, the kind of job selected, the amount of one's education, personal qualities, and one's ability to produce. Each of these points is portrayed so young people will gain insight into the personal improvement of earning power.

NEW HEALTH FILMS

SOCIAL ACCEPTABILITY

20 mins. sd. b&w $2.00
Produced by McGraw-Hill Company - 1957.

Through the story of a high school girl who fails to be accepted by a popular school clique, this film illustrates the correlation between social acceptability and the successful adjustment and happiness of the average adolescent. Suitable for showing to parent groups, teachers-in-training college and university students in psychology, mental health groups, and others concerned with the guidance of young people.

EMOTIONAL MATURITY

20 mins. sd. b&w $2.00
Produced by McGraw-Hill Co.

Another in the "Adolescent Development Series" concerned with the emotionally immature adolescent who can't face facts; is frustrated and loses control of himself. This is an educational film to be used as a provocative or preliminary stimulus to a discussion on emotional instability in the teenage boy. Suitable for showing to mental health groups home and school groups, teachers-in-training and university students in psychology.

CHILDREN WITH CLEFT PALATES

29 mins. sd. col. $3.00
Produced by the University of Michigan - 1956.

This film shows the importance of a well-coordinated team of dental, medical and other professional personnel in the treatment and correction of cleft palate. Recommended for showing to dental and medical groups, speech therapists rehabilitation groups, and parents of cleft palate children to acquaint them with the services that are available.

HOME CARE, AN APPROACH TO THE TREATMENT OF CHRONIC DISEASE

28½ mins. sd. b&w $3.00
Produced by Health and Welfare Materials Center - 1955.

This film, based on the experience of Montefiore Hospital in New York City, describes the functioning of a modern home care program for patients with chronic disease. A timely film which should find wide usage in the promotion of Home Care programs in the community with the coming of the hospital insurance plan in Canada.